



Michael F. Easley
Governor

February 2003

Volume 17 Number 2

William G. Ross Jr.
Secretary, DENR

RED WOLF ADDS MYSTIQUE AT PARK

The elusive red wolf may or may not be cruising parts of Goose Creek State Park. But, the possibility certainly lends mystique to a stunning new red wolf mount unveiled at the park in January.

Rangers began seeing signs in late 2001 that at least one red wolf had passed through the park, located across a county line from the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge where the red wolf recovery effort of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is centered.

A field worker from the federal agency visited the park but could not confirm that the tracks and scat were those of a red wolf.

It was about this time that rangers learned of the possibility of adding a mount to exhibits at the environmental education center. Ranger Jay Greenwood had contacted Art Beyer of the Red Wolf Recovery Program and asked to be put on a waiting list for a "mountable specimen." Last summer, a landowner mistook a red wolf for a coyote, took his shot, and the park had its red wolf for mounting.

Greenwood then approached the Friends of Goose Creek for help, and the group provided \$1,100 needed for the taxidermy and for a display case. It was completed in early January.

Shauna Baron, USFWS biologist and outreach coordinator for the Red Wolf Recovery Program, introduced the exhibit to the public Jan. 14 along with a lecture about the recovery efforts.

All that remains is for the division to print an informational panel to place behind the display case.



RED WOLF DISPLAY HAS PLACE OF HONOR AT GOOSE CREEK STATE PARK'S EDUCATION CENTER.

From the point in 1987 that the refuge was chosen as the site for a red wolf recovery program, state parks in the northeast have been keenly interested in its progress.

Since the opening of its education center in 1998, the Goose Creek staff has been involved in educating the public along the US 264/US 17 highway corridor about the program. A representative of the Red Wolf Coalition has led a public program in the park's auditorium every year since 1999.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

DIVISION REPRESENTED IN FIRST CLASS

Nine division supervisors were included in the first graduating class of a new Supervisory Development Program initiated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The class was honored at a short ceremony in Raleigh Jan. 15, which included best wishes and certificates of achievement given by DENR Secretary Bill Ross and Chief

Deputy Secretary Dempsey Benton.

The division graduates are personnel officer Teresa McCall, administrative officer Terah Councilman, superintendent Bryce Fleming of Kerr Lake State Recreation Area, rangers John Metz, Brian Hahn and Scott Letchworth, all of Falls Lake State Recreation Area, and maintenance mechanics Gilbert Floyd Barbour,

Jeffrey Grimes and Michael Parker, also of Falls Lake.

Ross said that the supervisory training program was a pet project of Benton, who is convinced that the success of DENR as an effective organization depends on the continuous development of its employees.

The program is based on the premise that an employee's level of job effectiveness and satisfaction depends largely on the quality of supervision that's available. The program is geared for new supervisors with up to two years of DENR supervisory experience.

The curriculum addresses eight leadership areas: organizational awareness/commitment, communication, performance management, service orientation, continuous improvement, professional and technical knowledge, facilitating change and managing conflict.

DENR's human resources division will present four more classes during 2003 at the Parker-Lincoln Building in Raleigh. Each class consists of nine instructional days over a six-month period.

BIRD COUNT SETS RECORD

On Dec. 30, Pettigrew State Park's annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count logged a record number of birds since their bird counts started in 1988. Even though only 100 species were identified, more than 414,000 birds were estimated to be in the area.

Red-wing blackbirds, snow geese and swans accounted for most of the large number.

From The Director's Desk

Dear fellow employees:

Over the past two years, the division has lost an unsettling number of people from key leadership positions through retirement. Despite this drain in human resources, we've been able to maintain a good level of service in the state parks and make progress in a number of programs. That's largely because we've been able to find talented replacements from within the division and DENR.

Last month, nine division employees graduated from DENR's new Supervisory Development Program. (A story about the graduation is also on this page.) As members of the first graduating class, they might have felt a bit like guinea pigs as the department ironed the wrinkles from the program, and they're to be commended for their persistence in completing an intense nine days in class over a six-month period.

A more formal program such as this that develops the supervisory skills of our folks can only help the parks system as it augments our own career development efforts. One of the best ways for our division to reach its fullest potential is to help our employees reach their fullest potential as well.

My congratulations to these nine and best wishes to other supervisors who'll be entering the program in the future.

Sincerely,

Phil

Philip K. McKnelly

RAVEN ROCK LAND OFFERS CHALLENGE

While the latest land acquisition at Raven Rock State Park happened at a near record pace, difficult decisions on how to manage the property are likely to take much longer.

On Dec. 19, the division acquired 716.6 acres adjacent to the park from Weyerhaeuser Corp. The timber company on Oct. 10 had notified Paul Haurt, Raven Rock superintendent, that the property was being placed on the market. The purchase was made after the executive committee of the Parks and Recreation Authority granted approval to use \$2 million from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.

"I was just absolutely amazed at how quickly all this came about," Hart said. Weyerhaeuser was anxious to close the deal before year's end, and that created a "win-win situation" for both parties, he said.

The property includes three tracts: the Salmon and

Womack tracts lying south of the Cape Fear River, and the Lanier Tract at the northwest corner of the park, north of the river. All three tracts have been identified in the master plan since the 1970s as desirable for park expansion.

Nearly all the acreage has been planted in loblolly pines and essentially managed as agricultural land.

"The issue that our division must consider is how do we manage a pine plantation," Hart said. "Do we restore it to a more appropriate natural community and, if so, how exactly do we go about doing that?"

There are tantalizing clues that the original natural community was longleaf pine forest, which disappeared through decades of timbering and fire suppression. Hart said that the newly acquired property has remnants of turpentine collection activity – a hallmark of a longleaf pine for-

est – and that clumps of wiregrass have been found within the old park boundary.

"When you see things like that, it's clear evidence that there was a lot of longleaf pine in this area at one time," Hart said.

From a recreation standpoint, the Salmon tract southeast of the park office offers a chance to expand the 11-mile foot trail system in line with the master plan, Hart said.

The Womack tract to the southwest will move the popular Campbell Creek Trail further within park boundaries. Until the acquisition, the trail at one point was within 15 feet of a portion of the Womack tract that was leased to a hunting club.

The Lanier tract north of the river should fit in well with plans to expand the park's seven-mile equestrian trail system, but still more property identified in the master plan must be acquired first, Hart said.

BIKE GROUP OFFERS PARTNERSHIP, PATROL BIKES

In May, Falls Lake State Recreation Area marked the completion and opening of the "South Loop," a 6-mile, advanced, single-track mountain bike trail that brought the total mileage of Beaverdam Mountain Bike Trail to 13 miles.

This bike trail system has been evolving for two years as core members of the North Raleigh Mountain Bike Association, working in conjunction with the Falls Lake staff, have made the pilot trail system a success. With the association taking on the majority of the maintenance and construction efforts through grants and donations, its members have shown a commitment to a long-term partnership with the division.

Long-term plans are to expand the mileage and possibly to incorporate the system as multi-use trails for hikers and bikers between Beaverdam and the Highway 50 Boat Launch recreation areas.

Recently, the association donated two new specialized mountain bikes, valued at \$1,600, for use by the Falls Lake staff for future bike patrols and operations.



Members of the North Raleigh Mountain Bike Association, involved in a pilot trail program, donate bikes to Falls Lake staff. From left, Ranger Brian Hahn, Reuben McFadden, Joe Rodriguez, Steve Kaufman, Tammy Kaufman, Sig Hutchinson, Scott Cooper, Richard King, Tom Petrucelli, Tommy Petrucelli, Eric Tribby, Bill Haste, Ranger Joe Shimel. (Members not pictured are: Howard Mitchell, Tim Nelson, Will Manroe, Chris Sanders, Steve Peck, Trey Irving, Pete Lazaro, Dave Marsic, Chris Crandall, Tom Butler, Dave Bender, Barney Baxter and Jeff Alford.)

VISITOR'S CENTER PUT TO GOOD USE

By JANE W. CONOLLY
Park Ranger II

The staff of Crowders Mountain State Park is fully aware of how fortunate it is to have one of the division's new visitor's centers. We strive to take full advantage of its potential out of respect for the many parks deserving of new centers that currently don't have one. As lead interpretive and education ranger, I'd like to share with you our visitor center efforts and plans.

The center's most frequent benefit is as a "great first impression." Visitors are impressed with its large, rustic lodge appearance sitting on a high knoll above the parking lot. The stone-and-timber themes are very pleasing to the eye and invite visitors inside for maps and information. Modern, clean restrooms are used heavily, hopefully preventing many "trailside pit-stops."

One of the most helpful aspects of the center is "rain-or-shine" programs. I recently organized a campfire program with four volunteer musicians and rangers Kelly Cooke, Scott Coffman and myself presenting stories and sing-a-longs. The program was featured in a Charlotte Observer article, and we roasted marshmallows and made S'mores. A program like this requires much behind-the-scenes preparation. And, then it rained!

We turned the visitor's center into a campfire scene using the large, open lobby and its fireplace. There was plenty of room for the 25 park visitors who braved the heavy and cold rain to attend. The musicians sat adjacent to the fireplace so visitors could see and enjoy both. Everyone seemed to fully enjoy the program, and from our viewpoint, it truly helps to prepare such a program without fear of weather cancellations.

We also use this "rain-or-shine" feature with school groups scheduled for park programs. This fall, three school groups of 75-100 children per group were able to complete field trips to Crowders Mountain despite rainy weather. We like to split large groups into subgroups of 25 or less.

We use the center's classroom, workroom, exhibit hall and auditorium as areas to present three or four different programs lasting 20-40 minutes each. Then, we rotate groups so all the students see all the programs. Schoolteachers appreciate those capabilities and are so relieved at not having to worry about cancellations. With arranging buses, permission slips, lunch and much more, field trips are a huge investment for a teacher. We



SMALL POND IS PART OF 'BACKYARD HABITAT' THAT SURROUNDS CROWDERS MOUNTAIN VISITOR'S CENTER.

do have an absolute limit of 100 students, and that number pushes the limits of effective education inside the center.

One of the most exciting aspects of the center is the up-and-coming exhibit hall. Two years of planning, research, photography, artifact collection, meetings and more are soon to result in what we hope will be great exhibits. Ranger Cooke, district I&E specialist Lea Beazley and myself have spear-headed staff responsibilities for the museum project. It is very exciting for the entire staff to see our efforts move towards a completed exhibit hall. Exhibits coordinator Karl Zorowski, lead I&E specialist Marti Kane and designer Chris White continue to move the process forward.

As part of the exhibit hall, visitors will enter the lobby to see a large and touchable relief map of the park and surrounding lands. All park trails and facilities will be represented on the map. Adjacent to this map, an exhibit will highlight four natural communities found at Crowders.

In keeping with our emphasis on stewardship, the visitor's center and its surroundings have been landscaped as an example of a backyard wildlife habitat. All landscaping plants are native to North Carolina (except for the fescue lawn). A butterfly garden has been planted in the front of the center with excellent results. A meadow with native grasses and wildlife-friendly plants has been planted over the septic system leach field. Brush and rock piles have been constructed. Bird and bat houses and feeders surround the meadow. A small pond serves as a wildlife water feature and as a venue for aquatic programming.

The concepts of backyard habitat are explained in text panels and other materials that, hopefully, will entice visitors to try the ideas at home.

PARK INVOLVED IN POLLUTION RESPONSE

By **TAMARA WARD**
Publications Coordinator

When studies in the 1990s found excessive amounts of fecal coliform and potential human pathogens in the near-shore water of Lake Waccamaw, the contamination was attributed to nonpoint source pollution — natural and human-made pollutants carried into a water source by precipitation.

Twenty-two ditches drain into Lake Waccamaw, and parts of the town's sewage system parallel the ditches. Following heavy rains, pollution levels in the lake spiked. The pollution was so concentrated that it threatened recreational activities and aquatic life on the northwestern shoreline, the most developed area near the lake.

A broad-brush response to this situation has involved Lake Waccamaw State Park and its friends group.

Efforts by a coalition of government agencies, citizens groups, universities and businesses resulted in two grants — \$100,000 from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and \$4.6 million from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund — to help improve and preserve the lake's water quality.

The grants are being used to educate citizens about preventing nonpoint source pollution, to monitor the lake's water quality and to redirect stormwater runoff away from Lake Waccamaw and back to its natural course into nearby swampland and into new manmade treatment areas.

Much of the EPA grant was directed to the Friends of



VOLUNTEERS LEIA JONES (LEFT) AND MYRA WALKER TEST THE SEDIMENTS FLUSHING INTO LAKE WACCAMAW FOLLOWING A HEAVY RAIN. SIX OF THE EIGHT SAMPLES TAKEN THIS DAY EXCEEDED STATE LIMITS FOR TURBIDITY AND E. COLI BACTERIA.

Lake Waccamaw State Park for educational workshops and newsletters. Cathy Neilson, chairman of the friends group, said the importance of educating the public and elected officials about nonpoint source pollution is key.

The group was involved in examining the northwestern shoreline's water woes from the beginning, volunteering to collect water samples, touring grant officials around the lake and notifying citizens about the detrimental effects of nonpoint source pollution, Neilson said.

The group's water quality/education coordinator, Deborah Kelso, helped write the EPA grant application along with environmental scientist and then-president of the North American Lake Management Society, Chris Holdren, and Al Delia, associate vice chancellor for regional development at East Carolina University.

"Since nonpoint source

pollution is so widespread and cannot be pinpointed in one place, it requires the help of the whole community to keep these pollutants from entering and harming the lake that we love so much," Kelso wrote in a December newsletter.

The friends group and the park staff organized water quality education programs at the park's new visitor's center. Topics range from recycling and composting to endemic species and the importance of preserving the lake's water quality.

"The lake is part of the park, and then there are the park lands," said Kelso. "I think you need cooperative partnerships to accomplish what you want to do."

At the first of a series of three workshops funded by the EPA grant, park ranger Toby Hall led a program about the importance of stopping nonpoint source pollution, and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

AWARDS PRESENTED IN SOUTH DISTRICT

AWARDS WERE PRESENTED TO SOUTH DISTRICT PERSONNEL JAN. 8 BY DIVISION DIRECTOR PHIL MCKNELLY (CENTER). THEY INCLUDED (FROM LEFT): RANGER RON ANDERSON OF LUMBER RIVER STATE PARK, DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD; MAINTENANCE MECHANIC RICKY SMITH OF SINGLETARY LAKE STATE PARK, HEROISM AWARD; RANGER CHRIS FOX OF JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA, HEROISM AWARD; RANGER JEFF CORBETT OF JONES LAKE STATE PARK; ADVANCED LAW ENFORCEMENT CERTIFICATE.



LAKE WACCAMAW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

district interpretation and education specialist Tom Howard talked about endemic species and flora and fauna of the area. During the two-day workshop, 65 people attended.

The park has also been a resource for the friends' bimonthly newsletter, mailed to all residences in the Lake Waccamaw area and available at a variety of public venues. The newsletter combines information about the lake's natural history and culture along with information about preventing nonpoint source pollution.

"As far as protection of the resource, this is probably one of the most significant efforts to ensure the protection of the water quality and all the flora and fauna affected by water quality in lake," said park superintendent Eric Dousharm of the entire educational initiative.

"Hopefully, it has an effect on peoples' personal habits: what homeowners directly on the lake are putting on their lawns, and making people more aware of what they're doing with their waste oil and with their pet waste."

The next workshop at the park is planned for March 14. Program topics include two new species that may be endemic to the lake, bay lakes, and stormwater systems and other types of nonpoint source pollution treatments.

Lake Waccamaw, designated outstanding resource waters in August, 2000, has the largest concentration of endemic animal species of any site in the state. Ten species are globally restricted to the lake and its immediately adjacent waters, according to a 1995 NC Natural Heritage Program inventory.

RED WOLF

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Baron's program explained the intense management involved in introducing a top predator back into the wild at the refuge, an effort the federal agency has dubbed "a race against extinction."

A public relations challenge is to distinguish the red wolf—usually weighing 45-80 pounds—from its larger cousin, the gray wolf, a predator often weighing 80-120 pounds that has had bad press at least since the Middle Ages.

By the 1970s, a population that once roamed from Pennsylvania to Texas had dwindled to fewer than 20. In 1987, four pups born in captivity were released in the refuge. Although they did not fare

well, they did produce a litter of pups.

By 2002, all of the red wolves in the region were born in the wild and "were a little bit smarter than their captive-raised parents," Baron said.

Through the recovery program, four generations of wolves now have been born in the wild and this year, there is the potential for 17 litters of six to eight to be born.

Baron tells a sometimes-skeptical public that the wolf is not a threat. As the top link in the food chain, the wolf provides a natural balance that has long been missing in the ecosystem, as it preys on white-tailed deer, nutria and raccoon.

North Carolina State Parks Monthly Attendance Report 2002

PARK					% CHANGE (2001/2002)	
	DECEMBER 2002	TOTAL YTD DEC. 2002	DECEMBER 2001	TOTAL YTD DEC. 2001	DEC.	YTD
Carolina Beach	8,336	236,609	10,985	258,057	-24%	-8%
Cliffs of the Neuse	3,583	137,486	4,488	132,821	-20%	4%
Crowder's Mountain	8,505	283,888	16,461	296,316	-48%	-4%
Eno River	2,775	292,018	17,997	319,393	-85%	-9%
Occoneetchee Mountain	280	33,778	2,097	35,786	-87%	-6%
Falls Lake	1,641	1,010,996	19,004	1,146,181	-91%	-12%
Fort Fisher	15,599	993,167	30,250	668,776	-48%	49%
Fort Macon	37,008	1,300,036	46,750	1,265,986	-21%	3%
Goose Creek	7,696	138,091	8,064	118,392	-5%	17%
Gorges	4,137	156,185	6,123	101,911	-32%	53%
Hammocks Beach	7,893	189,967	7,590	196,486	4%	-3%
Hanging Rock	10,824	390,827	14,126	405,342	-23%	-4%
Jockey's Ridge	55,270	1,016,944	21,232	993,198	160%	2%
Jones Lake	3,880	105,248	3,608	116,066	8%	-9%
Jordan Lake	3,172	1,537,319	28,144	1,230,872	-89%	25%
Kerr Lake	29,040	1,574,188	50,764	1,444,344	-43%	9%
Lake James	6,907	257,694	6,756	243,248	2%	6%
Lake Norman	1,883	362,902	13,704	257,857	-86%	41%
Lake Waccamaw	5,032	101,228	4,080	102,430	23%	-1%
Lumber River	2,638	57,081	3,135	53,026	-16%	8%
Medoc Mountain	316	70,155	2,668	69,177	-88%	1%
Merchant's Mill Pond	3,654	91,098	4,453	85,080	-18%	7%
Morrow Mountain	11,860	418,080	11,440	494,700	4%	-15%
Mount Jefferson	4,260	100,113	4,900	93,820	-13%	7%
Mount Mitchell	6,028	560,461	15,584	556,558	-61%	1%
New River	7,975	158,596	8,688	134,352	-8%	18%
Pettigrew	3,777	81,847	3,927	88,987	-4%	-8%
Pilot Mountain	16,767	392,305	18,368	428,659	-9%	-8%
Raven Rock	4,820	111,929	6,470	121,255	-26%	-8%
Singletary Lake	284	15,525	696	13,230	-59%	17%
South Mountains	7,740	167,509	8,358	186,242	-7%	-10%
Stone Mountain	13,128	453,157	30,280	534,194	-57%	-15%
Weymouth Woods	2,001	28,934	2,406	27,911	-17%	4%
William B. Umstead	2,712	387,493	25,013	401,636	-89%	-4%
SYSTEMWIDE TOTAL	301,421	13,212,854	458,609	12,622,289	-34%	5%

SECOND BIRD EXHIBIT READY TO TRAVEL

The second of three planned traveling exhibits examining neotropical bird species and explaining the threats they face was unveiled Jan. 25 at Goose Creek State Park.

Produced by the Friends of State Parks and financed largely through a grant from International Paper Co., the exhibit will be used for environmental education throughout coastal North Carolina by the NC Division of Parks and Recreation.

The Friends of State Parks unveiled a similar exhibit on birds of the Piedmont region last year at William B. Umstead State Park. It has proven very

popular with visitors. Yet a third exhibit is planned for parks in the mountain region, using the remainder of the \$20,000 grant.

The latest exhibit was unveiled during a regular meeting of the Friends of State Parks at Goose Creek.

Alec Whittaker, a board member and one of the creators of the exhibit, said the organization's goal is to promote public awareness of the contributions that state parks make to the quality of life for North Carolinians.

"We work to promote environmental awareness and education, conservation and outdoor recreation. We are gratified to have been able to work with International Paper Co. and the parks system to develop this exhibit," Whittaker said.

About 50 species of neotropical songbirds nest in North Carolina, and others pass through the state on their way to nesting areas farther north, feasting on insects along the way. Some neotropical shorebirds travel from as far away as South America, and others nest in the Arctic. Most of the songbirds migrate at night, using the stars and the earth's magnetic field to navigate.

One of the principal threats to the birds is habitat loss in nesting areas. While forests continue to be clearcut, neotropical migratory bird populations continue to be threatened.

The exhibit offers dioramas and mounted birds that nest in the North Carolina coastal plain. Four birds on display are the hooded warbler, yellow-billed cuckoo, ovenbird and wood thrush. Visitors can punch buttons to hear the birds' calls.

SAFETY ZONE

Avoid a Shocking Experience

- *When working outside, use extension cords specifically made for outdoor use.*
- *Install ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to avoid water-related shocks in the bathroom, kitchen, laundry room, garage and at outdoor outlets.*
- *Replace or repair all worn or damaged electrical cords and plugs.*
- *Never alter plugs to make them fit sockets.*

Mission

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks & Recreation is:



to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;

to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina;

to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources

and

for all citizens and visitors of North Carolina.

The Steward

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